


EXHIBIT 7

With Israel's Consent, Qatar Gave Gaza \$1 Billion Since 2012

 [haaretz.com/middle-east-news/palestinians/.premium-with-israel-s-consent-qatar-gave-gaza-1-billion-since-2012-1.6917856](https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/palestinians/.premium-with-israel-s-consent-qatar-gave-gaza-1-billion-since-2012-1.6917856)

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Qatar has provided Hamas in the Gaza Strip with over \$1.1 billion from 2012 to 2018, with the approval of the Israeli government. The information on the money was collected by an international organization and was presented to the Israeli security cabinet in January, after Israeli government professional staff confirmed the data.

In 2018 alone, Qatar gave Hamas in Gaza \$200 million for humanitarian aid, fuel and government salaries – and pledged to provide hundreds of millions of dollars more through United Nations aid groups.

About 44 percent of the money provided by Qatar during this period was invested in infrastructure, about 40 percent was used for education and health care – and the rest went to support Hamas and other groups in the Gaza Strip.

After the amounts of money involved began to rise, Attorney General Avichai Mendelblit held a meeting on the matter in which various government bodies, including legal and security authorities, were asked to examine whether it was possible to continue with the process of the huge transfer of funds without it constituting a violation of the sanctions against Hamas, which are in force because the organization is considered to be a terrorist group.

>> Qatari money calms Hamas, but doesn't guarantee long-term quiet in Gaza | Analysis ■ An imprisoned 'emir' could blow up the Israel-Gaza powder keg | Analysis

- Israeli defense officials object to calls to halt flow of Qatari funds into Gaza
- Abbas accuses Israel of funding Hamas in Gaza: 'Netanyahu personally transfers money, West Bank pays the price'
- After Israeli delay and Hamas' refusal, Qatari cash enters Gaza Strip

The report also shows that Qatar gave \$50 million to UNRWA, the United Nations relief agency for the Palestinian refugees, with Israel's approval.

UNRWA was on the verge of closing down many of its programs after the United States decided to stop funding for the organization. In January, Qatar signed an agreement in which it would contribute \$500 million to various UN agencies, and most of the money is expected to go to enabling UNRWA to continue operating in Gaza. This money will help to fund 180,000 Gazans and reduce unemployment.

An Israeli who was informed of the report on the Qatari money confirmed the contribution to UNRWA in 2018 helped to keep the organization from shutting down its activities and allowed it to continue operating in the Gaza Strip.

In November 2019, Qatar began sending suitcases filled with dollars to Hamas in Gaza, after Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas refused to allow money to be transferred to Hamas from Palestinian banks and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu suffered harsh criticism for allowing the Qataris to supply the funds.

So far, there have been three money transfers, including \$10 million for fuel and \$15 million for the salaries of Hamas government officials. The division of the funds was done at the request of Hamas, which wanted to present the payment of salaries as an achievement it had made as a result of the weekly protests along the border between Israel and Gaza.

Qatar decided to increase its aid to Gaza and other Arab countries in 2017, at the height of the diplomatic crisis between Qatar and a number of other countries, especially Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt. In an attempt to deflate the crisis, Qatar gave about \$700 million in 2017 in aid to Arab countries – compared to only \$10 million in 2011.

The growing conflict between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority served as fertile ground for Qatar to increase its involvement in the region. Israel, the UN, Hamas, Egypt and other countries courted Qatar, and the next year they provided \$200 million for Gaza. In comparison, other Arab countries received only \$39 million from Qatar last year – and Qatar almost completely halted its financial support for the PA.

In addition to the aid Hamas receives from Qatar, the organization also collects about 30 million shekels (\$8.2 million) in taxes on the fuel Israel sends to Gaza. Hamas also receives another 100 million shekels in taxes on goods that enter the Gaza Strip through the Kerem Shalom and Rafah border crossings with Israel and Egypt, respectively. All this money has improved Hamas' situation compared to the previous two years.

Other countries have provided funds for Hamas and Gaza in recent years, including Saudi Arabia – which is building a \$650 million desalination plant there. But European countries have reduced their participation in civil projects in Gaza, partly because Israel has refused to promise that these projects will not be attacked if another war breaks out with Hamas.